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MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

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Feminine Plural of Verbs.—In the *Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis* for June, 1886, p. 111, I called attention to the form צעדה, Gen. xlix. 22, as apparently a plural form, and not, as usually supposed, a singular verb used with a plural noun. The passage reads בנת צעדה עלי שור. A similar case occurs in 1 Sam. iv. 15, ועיניו קמה, where, however, a few codices read קמו (cf. 1 Kgs. xiv. 4). Now, in the Hebrew verb, we find in the Imperfect a distinction between the endings of the feminine and masculine plural. In the cognate languages this distinction exists not only in the Imperfect, but also in the Perfect. In Assyrian we find (permansive) the masculine plural, third person, ending in û, the feminine in â; as, šaknû, šaknâ. The same is true of the Western Aramaic; as, כתבו, כתבה. The Samaritan and Syriac distinguish the feminine gender by î, instead of â, the latter adding also the letter *n*. Thus we have in Samaritan qaṭalû, qaṭalî, but in Syriac qᶜṭalûn, qᶜṭalîn. Turning to the South Semitic, we find the Ethiopic in agreement with the Assyrian, while the Arabic, although possessing a separate form for the feminine, has obscured the original ending. Thus we have in Ethiopic nagalû, nagalâ, but in Arabic qatalû, qatalna. As endings of the masc. and fem. plural in the Imperfect, we find: Hebrew, û (ûn), and nâ; Western Aramaic and Syriac, ûn, and ân; Samaritan, û, and ân; Assyrian, û (ni), and â (ni); Ethiopic, û, and â; Arabic, ûna, and na. Comparing these forms, I think we may make bold to assert that in the original Semitic language the masculine plural of the verb throughout ended in û, the feminine in â. It accordingly becomes reasonable to explain the forms צעדה, Gen. xlix. 22, and קמה, 1 Sam. iv. 15, as survivals in the language of the Northern Kingdom of the ancient use, which was lost in classical Hebrew (but compare possibly 1 Kgs. xiv. 6, and Micah i. 9).

This comparison would seem, also, to make it evident that the feminine plural ending נה in the Imperfect of the Hebrew verb has resulted from an original â by insertion of the weak euphonic letter נ, as in נו֫, etc. It may further be suggested that the reason why the feminine plural became obsolete in the Perfect of the Hebrew verb is to be found in the peculiar development of the feminine singular; for, whereas in all the other languages of the Semitic family, the ending *at* has been retained as the feminine ending in the third person singular (Samaritan has an alternative form in â), in Hebrew the ending â has been substituted. This produced an inconvenient identity of form between the singular and plural, which

resulted in the loss of the latter. In the Imperfect, moreover, the Hebrew seems to have lost the sense of the essentially feminine character of the ending נה; accordingly, while in the third person the other languages of the family prefix the the simple sign of the Imperfect (י, Syriac ܢ), leaving both gender and number to be designated by the ending, the Hebrew prefixes the sign of feminine gender (ת), thus producing an accidental identity with the second person.

MASCULINE PLURAL IN ÔTH.—There are in Hebrew a few well known masculine plurals in ôth, such as אָבוֹת. All Hebrew grammars which I have examined explain these forms as feminine plurals with masculine signification. It is true that in Hebrew these forms have the appearance of being feminines, but a comparison with the Assyrian will show at once that the וֹת of the feminine plural, and the וֹת of the masculine plural have a different origin. The former is from an original ât, as shown by the Assyrian feminine plural ending âti, the latter from an original ût, as shown by the Assyrian masculine plural ending ûti. It is true that, owing to the identity of the resulting forms, some confusion has arisen in Hebrew use, but that does not affect the question of the origin of the masculine plural in וֹת. Another important case where an ô in Hebrew has resulted from an original *u*, is the Imperfect of the simple verb. The North Semitic used in the second syllable of the Imperfect either *u*, *a*, or *i*, as attested by the Assyrian; for example, iškun, iṣbat, iddin. These three vowels are represented in the Hebrew respectively by ô, a, ê; for example, יִקְטֹל, יִדְבַּק, יֹאחֵז. (It will be observed that in Hebrew the last form is used exclusively in verbs which have a weak initial consonant.) So also the ô in the Infinitive absolute of the Pî'ēl and Niph'ăl is the representative of an original *u*, while the ô in the Infinitive of Qăl represents an original â, as is shown by a comparison of the Hebrew קָטוֹל, נִקְטֹל, קַטֹּל, with the corresponding parts of the Assyrian verb šakan, namely, šakânu, naškunu, and šukkunu.

WAW CONSECUTIVE WITH THE IMPERFECT.—Turning to Gesenius' *Thesaurus*, I find three theories of the origin of וַ presented: (*a*) That it is a contraction from הָוָה (for הָיָה) by loss of initial ה; so that וַיִּקְטֹל was originally הָוָה יִקְטֹל, then וְהִיקְטֹל, and then by assimilation וַיִּקְטֹל; (*b*) that it is the representative of an original וְהָיָה; so that וַיִּקְטֹל stands by apocopation for וְהָיָה יִקְטֹל; (*c*) that it is merely a strengthened form of the simple וְ, the Dāghēš-forte representing no assimilation whatsoever. While at that time adopting the first of these three explanations, Gesenius admits a growing inclination toward the last. The editors of the ninth edition of the *Handwörterbuch* and of the twenty-third edition of the *Grammatik* have adopted the last explanation. Ewald regarded the Păthăḥ and Dāghēš-forte as proof of the existence in the form of another element beside the conjunction וְ, and thought that element to be the adverb אָז (archaic אָזַי, Assyrian adi). וַיִּקְטֹל would then be a contraction from וְאָזַיִקְטֹל. The analogy of the language appears to demand the explanation of Dāghēš-forte as due

to the assimilation of some consonant. The article presents phenomena similar to those of Wāw consecutive. In the case of the article the Dāghēš forte is explained by a comparison with the more remotely connected South Semitic family, where we find in Arabic the article *al*. This has been aspirated in Hebrew, from the same tendency which led to an aspiration of the preformatives of Nĭph'ăl and Hĭthpă'ēl, giving us the form הַל. The ל of this form has been treated as a weak letter, which it is also in Arabic, and hence assimilated, like ל in לקח. May we turn to the Arabic for the explanation of וַ also? We find in Arabic a conjunction *an* "that, so that; in order that, to," sign of direct quotation, equivalent, in its various uses, to *ut*, *quod*, ὅτι. Has this conjunction, lost elsewhere in Hebrew, been possibly preserved in the Dāghēš-forte of the Wāw consecutive? In that case וַיִּקְטֹל would be a contraction from an earlier וְאַן יִקְטֹל, the Dāghēš-forte representing, as so often, an assimilated *nun*. If this hypothesis were adopted, we should have to suppose that syntactically the ן represented an ellipsis to be supplied in thought before אַן. This would involve, apparently, the supposition that the original force of the Wāw consecutive was the expression of purpose or consequence, that of mere consecution being a later development. This would, moreover, involve the supposition that the use of the Wāw consecutive with the Perfect was the result of supposed analogy, after the origin and original force of the Wāw consecutive with the Perfect had been lost sight of. Whether this proposition be worthy of consideration or not, at least it seems to me that both the form and sense of וַ compel us to reject the theory that it is a mere variation of וְ.

THE USE OF NUMBERS IN HEBREW.—In HEBRAICA for April, 1886, I called attention to some peculiarities in the use of numbers in Hebrew. Every one, conservative as well as radical, has doubtless been perplexed by the astonishingly large number of persons who are stated by Hebrew writers to have perished in certain battles and the like. In a few places, the editors of *Scriptures Hebrew and Christian* have offered an explanation of puzzling numbers of this sort, which may be of interest to those who have not seen it. 1 Kgs. xx. 30, we read:

וַיָּנֻסוּ הַנּוֹתָרִים אֲפֵקָה אֶל־הָעִיר וַתִּפֹּל הַחוֹמָה עַל־עֶשְׂרִים וְשִׁבְעָה אֶלֶף אִישׁ הַנּוֹתָרִים וּבֶן־הֲדַד נָס וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָעִיר חֶדֶר בְּחֶדֶר׃

In its apparent sense, this sounds like a physical impossibility. The editors of *Scriptures Hebrew and Christian* have done it into English thus (p. 375): "And Ben-hadad, with twenty-seven thousand of them that were left, fled to Aphek, into the city; and the wall fell upon them. And Ben-hadad took refuge in an inner chamber in the hold." Similarly, in the same story, the number of Syrians said to have perished in the battle, verse 29, is referred back in sense to verse 27, as the total number of the Syrian army. A third instance of the same sort will be found on page 473 of the above-mentioned work. 2 Kgs. xix. 35, we are told:

וַיְהִי בַלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיֵּצֵא מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה וַיַּךְ בְּמַחֲנֵה אַשּׁוּר מֵאָה שְׁמוֹנִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה אָלֶף וַיַּשְׁכִּימוּ בַבֹּקֶר וְהִנֵּה כֻלָּם פִּגְרִים מֵתִים׃

The number in this verse the editors have understood to refer to the total number of Sennacherib's army, and not literally to the number that perished.

A word or two will explain the principle on which the Hebrew idiom has been thus interpreted. We say in English that an army perished utterly, where we have no intention of saying that all the individuals composing it perished. It is, literally considered, a hyperbolical statement. We might say that so and so invaded such and such a country with an army of one hundred thousand men, and that he was defeated, and his whole army perished. No one would suppose the narrator to mean that one hundred thousand men were actually killed. And yet, by a very slight change of wording, which, if both parts of the former statement be literally understood, involves no real change of meaning, we might narrate the same thing thus: So and so invaded such and such a country, and was defeated, and one hundred thousand men perished. The editors of *Scriptures Hebrew and Christian* have assumed the existence of the latter idiom, and translated it into terms of the former.

JUDGES V. 30.—The Revised Version translates this verse:

> Have they not found, have they not divided the spoil?
> A damsel, two damsels to every man;
> To Sisera a spoil of divers colours,
> A spoil of divers colours of embroidery,
> Of divers colours of embroidery on both sides, on the necks of the spoil?

Scriptures Hebrew and Christian translates it thus:

> Do they not find and share the spoil?
> A vulture crest or two for the head of the warrior,
> A spoil of gay robes for Sisera,
> A spoil of gay embroidered robes,
> A gay embroidered robe or two for the neck of the spoiler?

הלא ימצאו יחלקו שלל
רחם רחמתים לראש גבר
שלל צבעים לסיסרא
שלל צבעים רקמה
צבע רקמתים לצוארי שלל

Examining this with a special view to its parallelism of external form, we find that line 2 corresponds to line 5, and 3 to 4, word for word. It is evident that the first two words of line 2 refer to some sort of booty. רַחַם, or רֶחֶם, means "womb;" but in no place does any word from that root mean "woman." Here, however, tradition has assigned to it that sense, apparently on the ground that it meant some sort of booty, and that was the only sort which could in any way be brought into connection with the root sense "womb." But the word לְרֹאשׁ creates a new difficulty. Commentators have argued that it is used in the sense of "individual," as we sometimes use "head." To say the least, this would not be an apt occasion for the use of "head," meaning "individual." Moreover, in the parallel line we have "neck" used in its literal sense, which certainly creates a strong presumption that "head" is also used in its literal sense.

In view of the parallel line, and indeed of the contents of the entire stanza, which represents very graphically a woman's interest in dress, we expect to find in רחם some article of dress or adornment for the head. Now, we have in Hebrew a word רָחָם, a Semitic root, meaning "vulture." This has led Heilprin (*The Historical Poetry of the Ancient Hebrews*, I., 146) to suggest that the word meant vultures of precious metal, used as adornments of the helmets of men of station. At least I think it may be argued much more plausibly that it means vulture-crests, either as vultures of precious metal, or as much esteemed wings or plumes, like ostrich feathers among us, than that, following the old tradition, it means "woman."

A comparison of lines 2 and 5 also shows us that עבר and שלל are parallel. The editors of the ninth edition of Gesenius' *Handwörterbuch* regard שָׁלָל as a *nomen agentis*, in which sense it is a ἅπαξ λεγόμενον. I think it quite possible that the pointing should be changed to שֹׁלֵל; but in any case the parallelism proves a *nomen agentis*.

There is a looseness of grammatical use, in line 5, in the case of the dual רקמתים. The proper translation is suggested by the parallel words in line 2.

THE MEANING OF שדה.—In Assyrian the same sign (𒆳) is used as a determinative for either land or mountain. In the former sense the word is not infrequent in Hebrew, so that we have שדה העמלקי, שדה מואב, שדה פלשתים, שדה צען, שדה אדום, שדה ארם, etc. In this sense it is a synonym of the more common ארץ; it is accordingly used in 1 Chron. XVI. 32 and Ezra XXVI. 6, 8, as a synonym for another sense of the word ארץ, namely, "dry land." But by far the most common use of the word in Hebrew is in the sense of "country," as over against "city," and, a secondary sense to this one, "fields," as over against vineyards and the like. The editors of the ninth edition of Gesenius' *Handwörterbuch* give, as the first meaning of the word, "flat country," in distinction from "mountain land." This is one of the cases in which the editors have abused their position as lexicographers. They have invented a meaning to accord with their theory of the etymology of the word. There is absolutely no support for their theory in Hebrew usage. They refer to only one passage, Hos. XII. 13, וַיִּבְרַח יַעֲקֹב שְׂדֵה אֲרָם *And Jacob fled to the land of Aram.* A glance at the names of countries used in the Old Testament with the prefix שדה will show any one that this statement of the *Handwörterbuch* fairly deserves to be characterized as ridiculous.

In Judges V. 18, we find the phrase על מרומי שדה. It is very evident that here not only does שדה not mean "level ground," in distinction from "hill country," but it actually means the latter. Another passage looking in the same direction is Judg. XX. 31; perhaps also Jer. XIII. 27; XVII. 3, and Ezek. XXI. 2. Num. XXIII. 14, also, becomes much more intelligible if we understand by שדה "hill country" or "mountains," instead of "field," thus, "And he took him to Watchers' Mountains, to the top of Pisgah." Probably, however, the most inter-

esting passage in this connection is 2 Sam. I. 21. Here we have שדי used as parallel to and synonymous with הרי. Wellhausen (Sam. 152) has pointed out that the true LXX. text here read ὄρη θανάτου, and Thenius is of the same opinion. Both, moreover, recognize a corrupt text, and both object to the form שדי, which is found nowhere else. Adopting, not the LXX. text, but a suggestion from it, I would propose to amend וישדיתרומות into וישדות רמות, and translate "lofty mountains" (cf. Judg. v. 18).

The sign 𒆳 in Assyrian, when referring to a country, is read m a t u, when referring to mountains š a d u. The words š a d u and שדה are manifestly the same. But while שדה is used in Hebrew as the determinative of country, and the meaning "mountain" has almost vanished, the word š a d u in Assyrian means only "mountain," while another word has taken its place in the meaning "country." But the use of the same determinative for both words shows us that š a d u in the earliest Assyrian times carried the meaning "land," as well as "mountain." And I believe that the passages which I have adduced above show us that in Hebrew the word originally meant "mountain" as well as "land."